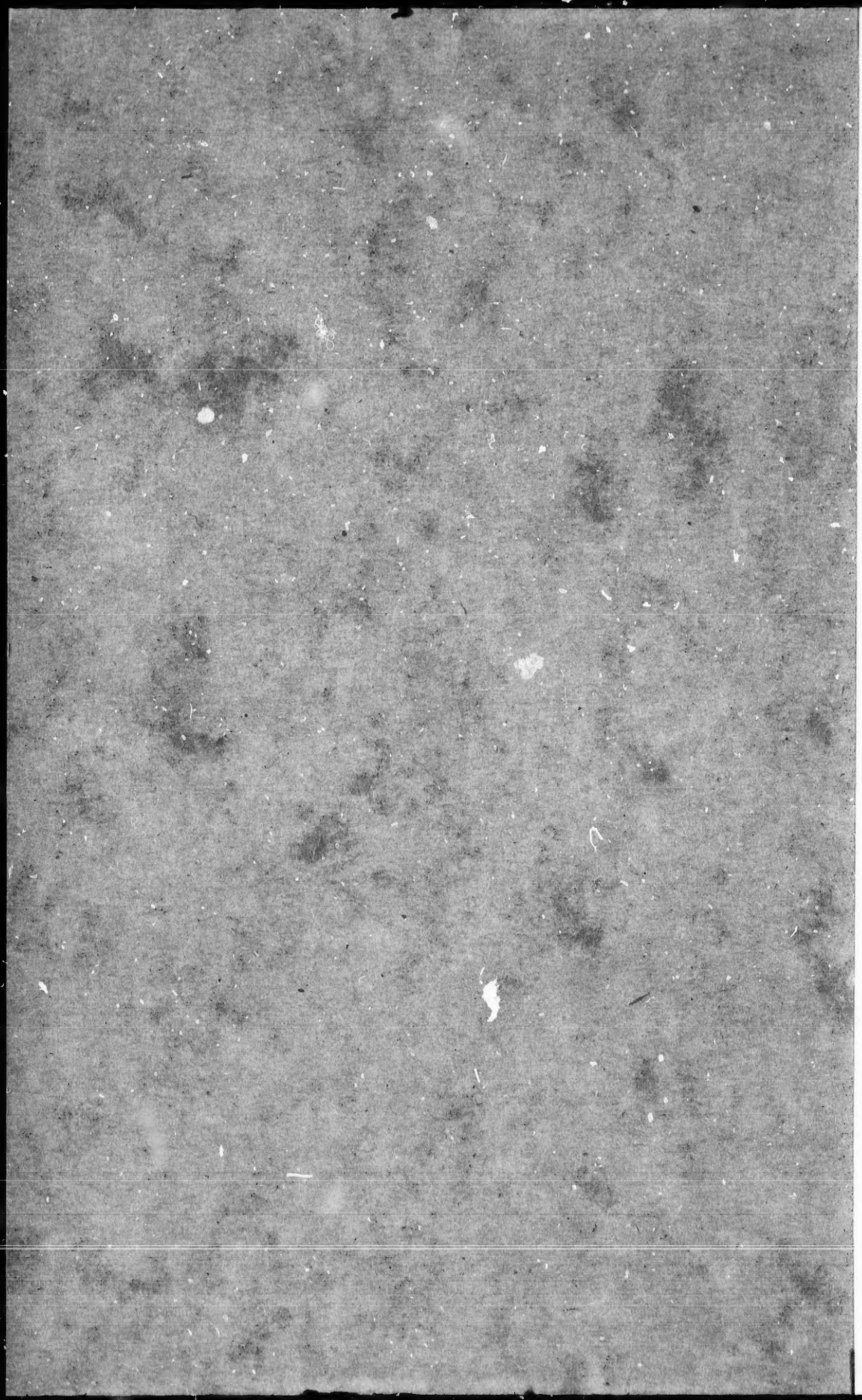

THE

PROPER SPHERE AND INFLUENCE

OF

WOMAN

IN

CHRISTIAN SOCIETY;

BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED

BY REV. ROBERT SEDGEWICK

BEFORE THE

Young Men's Christian Association,

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LECTURE.

It seems somewhat strange that at this time of day there should be any necessity for discussing the subject which has just been announced, either from the pulpit or the press, or in the Lecture room, as on the present occasion. One would have thought that this at least was a settled question—that it had been decided by universal consent, and that the unanimous voice of civilized and christian man had definitely and permanently fixed the sphere and influence of woman in christian society; but it is not so, and at this present time, and especially on this continent, this very question is agitated with a freedom and a fierceness too which augur badly for its settlement on reasonable and scriptural grounds, by those who view it in its moral aspects.

The errors and blunders which are interwoven with the subject of woman's rights and woman's place in modern society are, as these points now engage public attention, to be traced either to the ignoring of the fact or the omission of the fact that in the economy of nature or rather in the design of God, *woman is the complement of man.* In defining her sphere and describing her influence, this fact is fundamental. Unless this fact be admitted as an axiom in every way self-evident, no reasoning on this subject is sound, and no conclusion legitimate, and the whole theme becomes little better than a mass of mere assumption, alike illogical in its progress and unsatisfactory in its conclusions.

In many respects woman is the equal of man. Save in the matter of sex, she has similar form and features. In the higher departments of human nature, she is man's fellow. Her mind comprehends similar powers—her heart similar passions and affections. Regarding woman as Shakespeare regarded man, the apostrophe is as deserved as it is descriptive.

What a piece of work is woman! How noble in reason; how

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infinite in faculty; in form and moving, how express and admirable; in action, how like an angel; in appearance, how like a god! It were enough to establish all this by an appeal to history. What man has done as an intellectual and an emotional being, woman has done. What man has done as an active being, woman has done also; or if there be any superiority in these respects on the side of man, the reason does not lie so much in the nature of the powers as in the opportunity furnished for their developement and application; hence the stores of literature, ancient and modern, have been mightily enriched by the contributions of female genius and skill. If Greece had a Homer it had a Sappho too, each immortal in the divine art of poetry. If England had a Gibbon and a Hume, whose stately pen traced in flowing periods the story of the rise and the ruin of the kingdoms of the earth, it had a Strickland, who, with facile and graphic pen, described the faculties, the fortunes and the fate of England's Queens. If America had a Cooper whose glowing fancy bound as with an enchanter's spell, and an Irving, whose pathos in describing the pangs of a broken heart has melted into womanish tenderness the stoutest heart that ever beat in man's bosom, when reading of it, it has among the multitudes of its gentle authors a Harriet Beecher Stowe, a woman of whom the world is proud—a woman who has exalted not her sex but her race—a woman whose clear intellect has blazed out with an effulgence which shall dazzle into darkness the sorrows she reveals, and whose wide heart has rushed forth with a stream—a resistless stream,—of loving kindness and tender mercy, which shall sweep the miseries of slavery from the face of the earth.

In the regions of activity in all their variety, woman has proved herself equal to man. In the art of war, women have led armies to battle, and been victorious, as we read alike in sacred and profane story. Who so skilful in the subtle art of diplomacy as good queen Bess, and as powerful in the art of governing as the old Muscovite, bad queen Kate. Cecil, with all his craft, was not a match for the former; and as for the latter, she frowned out of sight the man nincompoops who surrounded her. It is in the walk of philanthropy and beneficence —of man-love and good doing, that woman has shone in her brightest and purest lustre. There have been Miss Nightingales in former years—the Frys, and the Newells, and the

Judsons, and the whole host of female heroines whose very names are enbalmed in the heart's core of humanity, and whose deeds of self-denial and of self-sacrifice done for the good of man shall be held in everlasting remembrance, are sufficient to establish the assertion that, as in activity generally, so in the activity of good will woman is the *com*-peer if not the *out*-peer of man. These proofs and illustrations are submitted with the design of fortifying the position which has already been laid down, that woman, after all, is but the complement of man. She behoved to be his equal, that she might be his completer. Had she been inferior in any of the respects mentioned, or indeed in any respect, she could not have been his help-meet, constituted as he is, and requiring as he does, an object similar to, yet diverse from, himself—his equal and yet his dependent—equal in power—dependent in position—he could not have felt himself complete—there could have been no sympathy in mind, in heart, in action, between them, unless woman could meet him and understand him, and feel with him and work with him, and thus be as God intended, his counterpart and his crown—his image and his love.

If it be thus clear that woman is the complement of man, it must follow that the sphere of the one is different from that of the other. The spheres in which they severally move are concentric indeed, and thus there must be a very great similarity between them; but there is a vast difference between diversity and opposition, and hence when it is asserted that the sphere of woman is different from that of man, it is not to be understood as if it were opposed or contrary to that of man. So far from this being the case, they correspond with each other, each to each; they are proportioned to each other, each to each; again they harmonize with each other, each to each; still again, and as they severally move in their allotted orbits, unless some powerful and malignant disturbing causes interfere, they yield to the control of the all-pervading principles of moral gravitation, the principle of love, and the practised ear might almost seem to revive the exploded astronomic fancy, and listen, and be charmed as it listens, to the music of the spheres

It may be worth while, therefore, to enquire what, after all, is the sphere of woman; and here it may be as well to adopt the good old way of shewing what it is not, and then of shewing what it is, looking at the subject negatively and then positively.

It has already been stated that woman is the equal of man, alike in the matter of intellect, emotion, and activity, and that she has shewn her capabilities in these respects so as to leave no doubt on the subject. It would never do, however, from these premises, to draw the conclusion that woman behoves and is bound to exert her powers in the same direction and for the same ends as man. This were to usurp the place of man—this were to forget her position as the complement of man, and assume a place she is incompetent to fill, or rather was not designed to fill. This were to leap out of her sphere and attempt to move in another, in which, to move rightly, the whole moral relations of society would behove to be changed, and suited anew to each other, but which, because they are unchangeable, every attempt is fraught with damage, it may be with ruin, and woman becomes a wandering star, which, having left its due place, and violated its prescribed relations, dashes itself into shivers against some other planet, whose path it crossed in the eccentricity of its movements, and goes out in the blackness of darkness for ever.

Perhaps the condition of woman in savage life affords one of the best, though a melancholy illustration, of this point. Surely in a state of society, in which it is deplored as a great family calamity, when a woman child is born into the world, in which female infanticide is established by a law, in which a man sells his daughter (not having previously murdered her) to be the slave of the passions of a man as savage as himself, while he lives, and to be killed in cold blood in honor of his death, when he dies, surely in a state of society in which all this is tolerated and sanctioned, woman is not moving in her proper sphere. Surely a state of society which regards woman as a slave because she is woman, and reduces her to the level, and in some cases beneath the level, of a beast of burden, and while loading her with the cares of wife-hood and mother-hood, condemns her at the same time to the veriest *serf-hood*—tilling the land, sowing and gathering the crop—providing in short for the family, and allowing her master, not her husband, ah! no, but her master, to fatten on her toils, and in brutish laziness to spend his time, except when roused by the excitement of the chase or maddened by the conflicts of war, *cannot* furnish the proper sphere of woman; and when the rude mess is spread out on the ruder table, and when the savage in his savageism,

gorging his inflamed appetite in barbaric solitude, or surrounded by his companions in laziness and in lust, frowns from his presence the woman he debases, and scarce deigns to cast her the refuse of his disgusting meal, it is manifest that somehow some sad revolution has befallen our race, and that woman is not moving in her proper sphere. And how unnatural for woman, nevertheless of the necessity of the thing or the romance of the thing, to be mixed up with the pomp and the circumstance, with the din and the strife of war. It has been that women have guided armies to battle, and by their skill and bravery led them to victory. It has been, that disguising her sex, and to gratify some fond passion or some wild curiosity, a gentle maiden has entered the ranks, and submitted to the punctilios and the severities of military discipline, but the voice of nature disapproves of the step, and at once pronounces it unbecoming and dangerous. The Amazons, that race of warlike women so famous in Grecian story and Grecian song, were but a mythic race after all; and the fact that women, as a class, have never been embodied for warlike purposes in any period of the world, or by any nation of the earth, would seem to demonstrate the incongruity which attaches to warlike women, and that female soldiers would be an outrageous anomaly in the body politic.

It must be granted indeed that woman's influence has often been the occasion of war; and when defensive wars were found to be necessary—when the aggressor had to be driven back and trodden down—when country and creed, when home and liberty, when nationality itself were in jeopardy by the invading foe, and there was nothing for it but to conquer or be destroyed, many a mother has devoted her son on the altar of their country, and hailed it as an honour, even when they fell in their country's defence, or, perchance, when they survived the campaign, and returned laden with laurels, though wearing the marks of their hard service, how has her heart beat with joy and her eye gleamed with gladness as she looked on their scars or listened to their tale of the gory struggle which secured to her and her nation, their altars and their homes.

And if the tented field be not woman's place, much less is the luxurious seraglio in which youth and beauty are prostituted under the sweet name of marriage to the pampering of the worst passions of the vilest voluptuary. A harem cannot be a

home. The two words are not synonymous; and the man who should attempt to assert that they are convertible terms, no matter whether he be Turk or christian, would be a fool for his pains. Polygamy is a violent intrusion into the sphere of woman; it displaces her from her rightful position in the constitution of nature; it is an impious improvement on the simplicity of the Divine arrangement; it is seeking for many what can only be obtained for one; it impeaches the wisdom of God, and thwarts the good of man. How can it comport with the prime principle on which the marriage relation proceeds. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave *to his wife*, and they twain shall be one.

It is naught to the purpose to assert that this practice has antiquity on its side. The said principle just stated is prior in antiquity still. It is naught to the purpose to assert that good and great men have adopted it; it was none to their advantage. Jacob had been as well without Leah—David without Bathsheba, while the times of that ignorance God winked at, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent; and yet men are not repenting. In reference to this very point a spirit of defiant opposition to the law of God and the good of man has come up from the bottomless pit, and, horrible to tell, is bewitching and seducing myriads of mankind alike in the old world and the new. It has been reserved for this last age of the world to witness the rise of an imposture on this continent, under the name of Mormonism, which, crossing the Atlantic, is rushing with fell swoop over the continent of Europe, and deceiving, with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness, the nations, mainly on the point now under consideration. The lawfulness of polygamy is its prime article; and alas for the weakness and the wickedness of man, is its prime attraction; and in nothing does the unsettled state of morals in general society appear more clearly than in the eagerness with which its doctrines are embraced and its prospects entertained. Especially does the success of this imposture prove that with all the enlightenment and progress which mark these times, there are, in respect of the position and duties of woman, among the masses of the population, an amount of ignorance and a swiftness in back-going that are absolutely appalling, and which, were it not for the securities which Christianity furnishes, would soon issue in the disorganization and overthrow of all civil and

social life. It is to be hoped that this imposture has culminated, and that now it shall wane. Its irrationality and presumption, its immorality and crime, are too manifest and too hideous much longer to withstand the force of truth and the power of purity. Joe Smith and his followers cannot much longer affront the good sense of christendom, and the whole fabric, at first so imposing and stupendous, even as symbolized by the temple at Nauvoo, falling by its own weight, will remain, if men think worth while to remember it, a specimen of the credulity of man and of the ease with which he may be filched of all that is dear to him by the plausible pretexts of that cunning craftiness which ever lieth in wait to deceive.

And if the tented field be not woman's sphere, nor the luxurious seraglio, so neither is the gloomy nunnery. Setting aside for the time the ecclesiastical view of the matter, and the spiritual aspect of it too, (for with these, in present circumstances, it would be improper to meddle,) pray what is the social aspect of the nunnery? So far as it goes, it is a breaking up of the social compact; so far as it goes, it deprives man of his complement; so far as it goes, it lessens, by every inmate within its walls, the homes of society, for everybody must see that in other circumstances the nun might have been a wife, and that wife a mother; and thus it is the nunnery *versus* home—it is the nunnery and its seclusion against home with its openness; it is the nunnery and its thraldom against home with its freedom; it is the nunnery and its asceticism against home with its cheerfulness; it is the nunnery and its gloom against home with its gladness.

There is something melancholy in the phrase which designates entrance into every such religious establishment—into every such religious house, as it is called, and which, though probably unwittingly, proves that on once crossing the threshold of such a place, a woman is relinquishing her proper sphere. The phrase is "taking the vail." Now, what is meant by such language, and why take the vail? Why shroud a woman with a vail when there is so much about her that is lovely, and that God made to be seen, and admired, and loved? Why shroud a woman with a vail to hide from her view those lovely and lovable objects which surround her, and which, with the powers that God has given her, she is able to understand, and admire, and love? It is not demanded here. Where is the Divine

warrant for this? Neither the theology nor the spirituality of the point is under consideration; but it is demanded where is the *rationale* of taking the vail—where is the common sense of taking the vail? Simply it is demanded, *cui bono*, what good end is served by taking the vail?

Let the nunnery system of Catholicism prevail—let it be maintained in its integrity—let the object it professes to accomplish be successful, and no abuse attach to its management, and the consequences are easily predicated. If it were possible to vail the sun which has just set with a covering of sackcloth, and shroud up the moon as with a funereal pall, and thus to envelope the round globe on which we tread with a darkness so dense that it could be felt, why, in such a case, joy would flee from every heart and the voice of melody from every tongue, and sullen grief would usurp their place, grief which, sinking down into hopeless despair, would find its only utterances in weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth; and the bright sward would lose its verdure and the crimson rose its hue, and the many tinted flowers, whose colours blending in so sweet harmony give the child, and the man too, their first ideas of beauty and of grace, would seem but a shapeless, colourless mass, and the bee would cease to hum and the cricket would forget to chirp, and the sweet notes of the merle and the blackbird would be stricken into silence, and the forests would be dumb and the air empty, echo itself would die in its cave, and solitude and death would reign supreme,—and so let this system prevail, and let it be what its abettors wish it, and the light would go out in many a home and the fire be swept from many a hearth, and the wild gleesome sounds which were wont to make the roof tree ring would be a thing unknown, and a heavy leaden load of sorrow would crush, crush, crush the fond mother's heart, while the worm, the gnawing worm of discontent, would prey on the vitals of the stricken father, now that ever as he crosses his own threshold he misses the jocund laugh and the winning smile, and the gleaming glance and the warm kiss, and the fond embrace and the thoughtful care, and the cordial welcome, which were wont to make him feel that just because his daughter was there, his home on earth was but a type of his home in heaven; aye, and the little children would wonderingly ask where their sister Ann had gone, and why it is that she is so long in coming home; and the manly boy who had

lost his companion, and, it may be, his counsellor in perplexity and his mediatrix in disgrace, would feel it to be the refinement of cruelty thus to rob him of his guardian and his friend.

Were it not that so much is said about it in the neighboring States, it would seem utterly preposterous to assert that Parliament was the proper sphere of woman, and that she is just where she ought to be when sitting on the red benches, and is engaged as she ought to be in drawing out Bills—in explaining and defending them—in standing in the arena of angry debate, and condemning and counterworking one course of policy by justifying and furthering another, and as is thought a better. Now first of all it might be asked how are women to get there? Are they to set up as candidates for the representation and come out on the hard-shell ticket or the soft-shell ticket, on the red or the blue; and are they to appear on the hustings on the day of nomination, and, unless unanimously elected, to demand a poll? One thing is certain—he would be a sheriff indeed who succeeded in keeping the peace, on the day of election, provided the contest lay between a male and a female candidate, and much more if it lay between two female candidates. And then is it to be a mixed Assembly, are the honorable man-members and woman-members to meet together and unite their wisdom in legislating for their country, then who is to be the speaker, surely gallantry would not suffer such an insult to be perpetrated as to keep the favourite political heroine out of the chair; and think of her arrayed in her robes of office and addressed as Mrs. Speaker or Miss Speaker, as the case may be, and with what deference would honorable members acknowledge her when they crossed the chair and with what reverential obeisance would they uncover before her august presence, and when angry debate arose and crimination was met with recrimination, and when the logomachy was just at its wildest, how would the ceiling ring with the authoritative command, "order, order," not pronounced, *ore rotundo*, as in former times, but with the shrill, piercing, biting tones of female good nature; or are the women to have a separate House and to manage the public business themselves, untrammelled by the presence, unawed by the criticism of their fellow male-members? This would be a Parliament with a vengeance. This if ever would be a speaking Assembly. And what are the powers with which such a House is to be invested? Are they to be subordinate to the other House? That would

never do. Or are they to be co-ordinate with them? That would be as unsatisfactory. Or, as probably the ladies would wish it, are they to be superordinate? Why, the claim would be resented as a most presumptuous invasion of the rights of men, and as utterly intolerable as fairly beyond the limits of the Constitution.

It might seem indelicate to conjecture the business to be introduced and transacted by this female Parliament. There would likely be a revival of the old sumptuary laws, a measure which they would unanimously declare was fairly within their power to introduce, and which moreover they imagined they were best fit to manage, and hence the likelihood that on some fitting afternoon of the female session some honorable member would ask leave to introduce a bill for the better regulation of male dress and adornment, consisting of but two sections, the first bearing that no gentleman within the ages of sixteen and twenty-four be permitted to wear a moustache on his upper lip more than two inches long, and the second bearing that no gentleman within said age to wear more than three rings on his right hand.

It may be after all that ridicule is the test of truth, and that the best way of dealing with such a vagary as this is to cover it with the ludicrous. It may be that the restlessness and the folly of the men and the women, who in such a mad attempt are doing their utmost to turn the world upside down, are best exposed by subjecting them to the test of the grotesque and ridiculous. But seriously, that the question of investing woman with similar political rights with man, and demanding of her the discharge of similar political duties, should have arisen at this time of day, after such a world-wide and a world-long experience, is indeed one of the wonders of the age.

There is a passage in one of the Lectures of Horace Mann on the powers and duties of woman, which is every way so appropriate and withal so clear and convincing and eloquent as illustrating this point, that it deserves an acquaintanceship as extensive as possible:—

"That there is an infinite distance between the name of politics and the craft of politicians, and that vast advances, stage beyond stage, indefinitely onwards, are yet to be evolved from political science and applied to the great art of making nations happy. I have no doubt but at the present time I can conceive

of nothing, excepting either some enterprise of benevolence, for whose success the aid of Government is essential, or the rescue from peril of some great principles fundamental to the well-being of mankind, such as are enumerated in the Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence, which can compensate any man of cultivated mind and a peaceful disposition, much less any woman, for entering the political arena and encountering the same class of opponents that St. Paul says he fought with at Ephesus. Besides, improvements and reforms in politics are to be the result or consequence of improvements and reforms in other things, in household training, in neighbourhood proprieties, and decencies in public opinion generally. All that laws, whether penal or prohibitory, can do is to fasten and hold public practice up to the elevation which public sentiment had before reached. To open fountains of purity and honour, therefore, at the fireside, in the village circle and at the village school, until their influence shall overflow into the street and the market-place, and at last reach the hustings and the voting room, is not this a duty infinitely more delicate, more noble, and therefore better suited to woman, than to turn legislator, jailor and hangman herself? Politics at best is but a crude instrument of reform, incapable of nice discrimination, often including the good in its condemnations and in its legal justifications the bad, and furnishing endless examples, both in the persons who are condemned and in the penalties which are inflicted, how inferior in precision, justice and equity, is any human law when compared with the Divine. Even the best agents who are selected for the execution of our criminal codes are so blind that they never detect half the offenders, so slow that they never catch half whom they detect, and so subject to weakness and to every quality of human bias that justice, in passing through their hands, is sometimes sweetened into compassion and pardon, and sometimes vitriolized into vengeance, before it reaches its object. But the tribunal of a pure conscience and an enlightened reason, which the true reformer, the true mother and the true teacher can establish in the human breast, suffers no offending deed, nay, no offending thought or desire, to escape, holds the balances of justice with untrembling hands, and punishes by tale and by weight, according to self conscious accusations, rewards too for every good deed that is done. What gentle woman, pondering upon these truths, will not exclaim, I had rather be a doorkeeper in

se house where such as Christ took in his arms and blessed, are gathered together, than to dwell in political tents and be crowned with all political honours. Nothing, as it seems to be, can account for the present clamour in behalf of women voters and women office-holders but the amazingly false notions which prevail respecting the intrinsic dignity and enduring importance of education, as compared with the ephemeral tinsel of political distinctions. Respecting the clean and beautiful work of the teacher, training up characters to empyrean height and purity, as compared with the noisome and bloody work of the politician, sometimes flaying and cauterizing, and sometimes amputating and beheading, to cure or cut away from the body politic those frightful gangrenes whose very existence would have been prevented by the intelligent and faithful performance of woman's earlier and holier service. As to the idea that woman has a self evident and inalienable right to assist in the government of the race, I reply she does assist in that government now, and would to heaven she would exercise a still larger share in its administration. But this great work, like all others, is naturally divided between the sexes, the nobler government of children belonging to women, the less noble government of adults to man.

But, if the Halls of Legislature and of Congress were opened to women, they would purify them it is said. The answer to this must recognize both hypotheses respecting the sexes. First, if woman is like man, why should she not do as man has done, only aggravating and multiplying his evil works, because then the competitors would be doubled and all restraints withdrawn. But secondly, as I contend, woman is unlike man, better when she is good and worse when she is bad. Then, at least, in the present state of society, I believe that her participation in political strifes, ambitions and cupidities, would rouse to tempestuous fury all the passions that ever swept her to swiftest perdition.—Men and women are yet drawn together by too many passional affinities to allow us even to hope that husbands could leave their wives, and wives their husbands, and pass for months and months, by day and by night, through all the enforced intimacies and juxtapositions of legislative life without something more than pure platonic emotions, and she who wishes her sex to encounter these perils has forgotten the wisest prayer that was ever made, "Lead us not into temptation."

Politics are now full of servile and base machinations, and

many politicians trade in votes as brokers trade in stocks, but under the combined machinations of politics and amours the trade would be not only in votes, but in virtue, and to existing venality and official malversation would be added the vices that made Sodom and Gomorrah. The propensities would be enlisted to supplement logic, and the triumphs of public men and the success of public measures would be determined by baser instincts than those of ambition or avarice. Restraining men from impurity, as women now do, and can a thousand times more than they do, much may be accomplished, not only in the way of legislative morals, but of the morals of legislators. But whoever, in our present state of society, advocates the promiscuous mingling of men and women at the canvass and the ballot-box, in State Legislatures and Congressional Halls, is striving to promote, whether consciously or unconsciously, the return of the Courts of Louis XV. and Charles II., and as the exponents of these Courts other hell-ascended of Madame Du Barrys and Duchesses of Cleveland and Portsmouth. May God save our wives, our mothers, and our daughters, from the uncleanness and the rancour, from the savagery and the temptations of politics, and may woman beware lest she die of the disease her rashness attempts to heal.

In justice, however, to the other side of this question, perhaps I ought not to omit certain collateral and incidental benefits which may be claimed to accrue should woman strip off her sex and rough it with man in the turbulence and riot of the political arena. What a beautiful school for domestic debate, prolonged not merely from morn to dewy eve, but from eve to early morn, should the father be a whig, the mother a democrat, and the daughter a third party man. On the stump, at the hustings or other bear-garden, the intimate relation of husband and wife would furnish admirable facilities for mutual impeachment and recrimination, which to bachelors and marriage haters would be intensely edifying. If husband and wife were rivals for the same office, then, no matter which party might prevail, the honour and emoluments would still come into the family, or, if both were elected to Senate or House, they might pelt each other from the opposition benches, which would be a great relief from closer quarters. It is well known that, in every political campaign, there is a vast deal of Paul Prying and eaves-dropping to be done to learn the enemy's strategy, but in this new Utopia

the husband might just as honorably get at the wife's correspondence by picking a lock, or the wife get at the husband's secrets by tickling him to talk in his sleep. As to the parents' equal right to inculcate hostile political doctrines on the minds of their children they might make a compromise, each devoting alternate lessons on alternate days to the exposure of the other's iniquities, so that the children in the end would have a good opportunity to know the weakness of them both."

From the making of laws, and all the trouble attendant on the process, the transition is easy, in this argument, to their administration; and certainly, if in the former case woman is out of her sphere, she would seem as improperly situated, whether on the bench deciding, or at the bar accusing, or in the jury-box weighing, or in the jail watching, or as a sheriff issuing a mandamus for the apprehension of some poor wight who had somehow outraged the decorum of society, or as a constable dodging him in all his doublings till he was fairly caught and lodged in limbo. What can be more unfeminine than a woman thief-catcher? It is true she might answer somewhat ably in this department in the matter of skill and adroitness, the natural shrewdness of the woman's head would often be a match for the cunning and the craft of the housebreaker or the thief, but the constable's staff, as wielded by her arm, would scarce stand against the blow of the ruffian's practised fist, that would be very apt to come in contact with her face, and perchance paint her eye a little too darkly to comport with the lines of feminine beauty.

Even a posse of such constables might not suffice, for most assuredly might would overcome right, and thus the majesty of law would be insulted in the loss of its victim. And how think you would the jury-box look when packed with twelve honored matrons, or with an agreeable mixture of youth and beauty and age and experience, keeping out of sight the necessary absence from home, as it often happens for weeks together, and the compulsory attendance on Court, for it would never do to relax the law of attendance, and the coarse contact with all sorts of persons to which they would be exposed, and the other thousand and one annoyances connected with their situation. How would they look in the jury-box? Is it likely that there would be a sufficiently cool and unbiassed weighing of evidence as would secure an equitable and just verdict? Especially, is it likely that, on the evidence being closed and the counsel, rising in so-

lemn grandeur, utters the usual exordium, Ladies of the Jury, where would be that staid attention and that resolute resistance against the sophistries and plausibilities which he might employ to mystify the question and entangle their minds, that are so requisite in order that the ends of justice be served and a righteous verdict brought in? But the judge has laid down the law, and, after a charge of some three hours length, they are sent into the jury room with the injunction to prepare and bring in their verdict in due course. Locked up in their apartment and told that they must be unanimous in their judgment, and that they are neither to eat nor drink, not even the solitary cup of tea, till they have decided, alas! for the verdict when it is brought in and the interests of the parties involved in the suit.

And, even though there was nothing of the incongruous and unbecoming about the thing generally, look at the kind of questions they would have to try. Take the docket of the Supreme Court, either civil or criminal, and is it to be thought that the most intelligent and wisest among our women are competent to sit on them? It would be as wise to submit the question of colour to a man that was born blind, or of harmony to a man who could not hear. What is a woman expected to know whether a drain be dug with the right inclination, or a pile of bricks be really merchantable? What is a woman to know whether the farrier has just done the right thing by the horse, or whether the jockey has not diddled the greenhorn? These are a sample of the questions which juries have to settle, and the bare mention of them is sufficient to show that they cannot be adjusted to the general satisfaction except by persons whose every day employment, or whose professional calling, brings them into contact with the business and the commerce of every day life. And, if the incongruity is obvious in the civil, much more is it obvious in the criminal department; and, as the instincts and feelings of nature are against them, on being engaged in the one case, much more are they against women being engaged in the other.

It might be useful to expand this particular to much greater length, as was indicated at the commencement of the illustration, and show how unsuitable the profession of law is to female capability and tendency and female position, but there is so much of the subject yet to overtake that a very few words must suffice.

That the legal profession is honourable, notwithstanding the vulgar prejudices against it, none will deny whose opinion is worth any thing on the subject. That this profession is necessary in the present state of society is as readily admitted. There seems to be something natural about the spirit of litigation, and that it has not merely been begotten out of the complex social relations which bind us to each other. It is not a small class of persons who have an itch for law, and to whom few things give more real pleasure, more exquisite delight, than a well gaining law plea, and thus it is that the necessity of the case demands that there be a class of persons who shall make the laws of the land their study, the due administration of them their business. Now, should woman be engaged in this profession? Does it comport with correct ideas of female character and position that there should be gentle women learned in the law? Are the questions which law behoves to settle such as women should entertain, and are the means which be necessary to settle these questions such as women should employ? Some of you know what is meant by a lawyer's letter, should women be employed to write them? Some of you know the power of a summons, should women be authorized to issue them? Some of you are aware of the functions of a barrister, should women, arrayed in legal vestments, practise at the bar? There are some magistrates before me, and, for aught I know, some of the judges of the land, would you be greatly assisted or honoured with one or more female coadjutors on the bench? Is it fitting that women should bring ugly and complex and vile cases into Court, and have their intellect, and heart too, engaged and affected, so as to make the most and the best of the case of their client? One would think that the drawing of deeds and conveyances, that arranging marriage settlements and dowager's portions, that framing issues and extending condescendences, that, in short, stating questions and getting up answers, and furnisl ng duplise and replies, so as best to prolong the cause and hinder it from dragging its dull slow length along, was any thing but suitable exercise either for a woman's head or a woman's heart, either for a woman's tongue or a woman's pen. There is little enough, God wot, among us of genuine simplicity. Our factitious state has well nigh engulphed whatever of nature and heart a poor man had left him. The artificial and technical

has all but absorbed the real and the true; and go where we will, with but one exception, and even that is scarce an exception, there is such a mixture of the deleterious about it—I mean into the bosom of a Christian family—go where we will, we meet with so much that is mere surface and show, so much that prevents you from seeing things and persons just as they are, that, were our daughters and our wives to give themselves to law and spend their lives in threading its mazes and applying its provisions, our homes would be metamorphosed into dingy dens where skill and craft try to outwit each other, and our parlours into scenes of moody silence or cold reserve, or of suspicion fearful of disclosure and defeat.

It would be no easy matter to decide which would be most hurtful to man at large, were women to become politicians on the one hand or lawyers on the other, but should the time ever come which is so ardently sought for by the fanatical advocates of Woman's Rights, that they would be both—these very parties would be the first to feel, and not the last to acknowledge, that they had raised a demon and given him a place in a sacred temple reared for another and a nobler inmate, which no mere human power would be able to exercise.

Even at the risk of being tedious on this part of the subject, there seems a necessity for stating that the public factory is not the proper sphere of woman. It is granted that physiologically the framework of the female is more delicate and fragile than that of man, and it is granted too that her mental constitution has been cast in a finer mould, and the whole texture of the mechanism of her inner nature is every way more susceptible and impressible. All this is admitted. Now, even taking this lowest possible view of the case, how detrimental to the health to be *confined*, I use the word advisedly, to be *confined* in the rooms of a factory, no matter how well ventilated, for ten hours a day, and that too for six days in the week. It has been found that, even when an ordinary amount of health was possessed, yet, in consequence of the temperature of the apartments and other circumstances, when females enter such places very young they reach womanhood prematurely, and sink down into an early old age, worn out in constitution at a period of their lives when they might have been enjoying lusty health. And how detrimental to their mental, as well as their bodily health, such confinement. The din and

the whirl, the rumble and the roll, of the machinery acting on their mental and moral nature so as to destroy, or all but destroy, that fineness of feeling and gentleness of behaviour which seem connatural to woman from the very fact of her sex; a factory girl, in Scotland at least, being but another phrase for coarseness of temper and vulgarity of deportment. Other causes indeed help to produce such a result, but the one just indicated is the prime one, intensifying with much of their malignity the other deteriorating influences to which this situation subjects them.

Is there not something unnatural also in the restraints which are hereby inflicted on woman? At half-past five of early morn the chime of the factory-bell is heard, it may be, amid the dreams of a troubled sleep, rousing the child of labour to her day's weary darg; with hasty unconcern she finishes her rude toilet, and, all untaught to kneel before the Lord her Maker, to ask him either for mercy or grace, she rushes forth, no matter whether it be in sunshine or in storm, and hurries onward lest she be but a minute too late at her post and lest that minute's price be deducted from her scanty earnings at the week's end. And now the toil begins. The monster wheel or mightier engine, setting the whole house a trembling and demanding the incessant attention of eyes and hands and feet till the hour of the morning meal calls for a suspension, and that meal hastily snatched and the time expired, why the labour is renewed with the same monotony and the same fatigue as before, till, by the time the day closes, nature is well nigh exhausted, and the weary, languid child, with scarce leisure to romp with her playmates, and unable to mix in the gambols and pleasantries of buoyant youth happy in its freedom, retires to the same trundle bed to sleep the same troubled sleep, to wake to the same hard unmusical chime, to drag out the same weary day's darg, and thus—

Work, work, work,
While the cock is crowing aloof,
And work, work, work,
'Till the stars shine through the roof,
Its better to be a slave,
Along with the turbaned Turk
Where woman has never a soul to save
If this is Christian work!

Work, work, work,
Till the brain begins to swim,
Work, work, work,
Till the eyes are heavy and dim,
Shuttle and beam and lay,
And lay, and shuttle and beam,
Till over the loom I fall asleep,
And still we toil on in a dream.

O men with sisters dear,
O men with mothers and wives,
It 's not factory cotton you're weaving out,
But human creatures lives.
Clank, clank, clank,
In poverty, hunger and dirt,
Weaving at once with the weary loom,
A shroud as well as a shirt.

But we argue that the factory is not the sphere of woman on many additional grounds. It is impossible, for example, that women engaged in factories can be at all acquainted, or at any rate be expert, in household duties. How can they, when, from the time they are able, (it is something to say now, as an improvement on this, when, from the time the law allows,) they are sent to the factory, and thus are denied the opportunity of getting the information? "Can you wash?" so said one young girl to another who was working in a factory: "Can you wash?" "No, but my mother can do it." "Can you bake?" "No, but my mother can do it." "Can you darn?" "No, but my mother can do it." And yet, now-a-days, it is come to this, that even the women who have spent their teens in factories, when they become wives and mothers, are entirely ignorant of the art of housekeeping, and just because of this ignorance a vast, a very legion, of evils has sprung up in our social state, evils which are positively eradicating home, and the pleasures of home, out of the teeming working population of our large cities.

In public factories there is, to a great extent, the promiscuous mingling of the sexes. Now, though there were no other evils growing out of this fact, as, alas! there is, and these neither few nor small, it leads to early, imprudent, and improvident marriages. Parties are joined in wedlock in our large manufacturing towns, who, because they work in the same factory, become acquainted, and, as they think, attached to each

other. As often happens, they are young persons from the country; well, they have no home—they have no property, except their time, not even a bed they can call their own—no apparel, except what is commonly called their working clothes—nothing, in short, but their time, and the wretch of their time which they get of a Saturday afternoon—yet they take it into their heads to marry, and married they are. I remember, a considerable time ago, on a visit to the Town of Dundee, in Scotland, of marrying just such a couple. The marriage party came to the minister's house in which I was for the time. He was absent on some professional engagement. The parties were impatient, and I had to stand in his room. And how think you did they appear? The bridegroom was fashionably dressed, not in a new, but in a newly bleached white fustian jacket, and trowsers to match, with a clean blue striped shirt, set off with a flaring spun silk napkin, while the bride had on a clean printed gown and a check apron. And, when I bade the parties join hands, why there was none of your awkward modish delay, which sometimes occurs at this particular juncture of the marriage ceremony, for the hands of both the parties were in want of gloves, that necessary luxury of fashionable life. Oh! could I have traced the history of the family I was thus instrumental in forming, how many sad, aye, and black, chapters would I behove to have written! I might have followed them to their low and comfortless lodging-house, and have seen them spend, it may be, their last sixpence in debasing gratification. On the first Sabbath after their marriage, instead of meeting them in the house of God, and declaring in his presence, if not in words, at least in action, as for us and our house we will serve thee, O thou God of the families of Israel, I might have seen them either roistering with the godless in the public house or moodily killing the time in their hired room. And, when the harsh sound of the factory bell told them, in tones not to be trifled with, that Monday morning had come, and that they together must renew their toil, I must have seen them trudging together, no very enviable example of matrimonial bliss. But I dare not indulge in such musings, they are all too painful and all too melancholy thoughts for the present time; they are deserving the thought, aye, and the expansion also of every philanthropist, of every man among us who loves his kind.

I will not say it was a sad day for the *wealth* of my native land when the spinning-jenny superseded the spinning-wheel, and when the customer weaver had to give place to the power loom. It may be that broadcloth is more comely than home-spun and the gay party-coloured ribbon than the modest snood, but I will say, and I do say, it was a sad day for the *worth* of my native land when these things happened. Public factories have invaded the privacies and the sanctities of home. They have stolen from home its choicest treasure, its purest joy.—They have robbed it of its charm to myriads of my countrymen, so that now there is neither for them the *dulce domum* nor the *fidelis uxor*. They have come between man and his dignity and his happiness as a human being. And the consequence is that somehow, and I hope I have done somewhat this evening to account for it, increase in wealth and decrease in worth have been simultaneous, and, as the nation grows in riches, it is more prolific of rags and wretchedness; yes, and the growth is rank and luxuriant, and, as in the natural world, it is breeding a pestilence. The succulence of our large towns at times is, shall I say it, fomenting. The mass of homeless, hapless children growing up in ignorance and crime, of crossed and crushed and hopeless wives warring against their sad fate, and of toiled and trampled men whose bones and sinews, whose life's blood is battling with the improvements in machinery and the influence of capital, are seething together in wild confusion, and, unless the Spirit be poured out from on High, not on the Church only, but on all flesh, as is promised, oh! the pestilence will break forth and sweep like the death breathing simoom over the land, leaving but a desert desolation behind it. The constitution of society cannot be invaded with impunity, and the laws of God must be honoured, either by submitting to their authority or taking the alternative.

I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, and I have no itch, certainly, for indulging in gloomy forbodings. The laws, however, which regulate the social state are the same for man wherever he be situated, and the infraction of these laws is just as necessarily followed by the same consequences. It may not be a sad day, therefore, for the *wealth* of my adopted country when the spinning-jenny shall supersede the spinning-wheel, when this useful implement shall no longer be required in our farmers' houses, and when, it may be, some fine spec-

men shall be laid up in the Museum of Dalhousie College as a proof of the rude simplicity of the times of our forefathers, but, unless the spinning-jenny be cramped in its power by wise and wholesome laws, and that too in the very beginning of its work, unless the law shall say to it, when looking wistfully at our daughters and wives, at our homes with their cheerful firesides and groupings of happy faces and commingling of holy loving hearts, hitherto shall thou come and no farther, it will be a sad day for the *worth* of my adopted country. It is the boast of Nova Scotia that it is a land without crime. Its jails are well nigh empty, and its judges, so far as the criminal code is concerned, might often on their circuit be presented, according to ancient custom, with a pair of white gloves. But, let a state of society be induced by which our women sh'll be tempted from their homes, and all for the paltry advantage of a little better pay be exposed to the debasing influences to which I have adverted. Let them degenerate into mere human automatons and be so situated that they become utterly unfit for their special vocation in life. Let all this happen with us, as it has occurred elsewhere, and ignorance and crime, and wickedness and rags, will be no strangers among us, and with the wealth we will have the woe of other lands.

It is now time that woman's sphere in Christian society be defined and described. It has been shown negatively what it is not. It requires to be shown positively what it is, and, after the previous statements and illustrations, this is no difficult matter." Indeed, the matter is settled in your own minds, and therefore it would seem there is little or no necessity to announce it formally. The sphere of woman is home and whatever is co-relative with home in the social economy.

And what a word is home. Compare it with the word camp—compare it with the word harem—compare it with the word convent—compare it with the word parliament—compare it with the word court—compare it with the word factory—so far as woman is concerned, and how vastly more seemly and natural are the notions we entertain of her sphere in the one case than those which we entertain of her sphere in the other? In the use of any of these words, as relating to woman, there is associated a feeling of the incongruous and misplaced; but in the use of the word home, as relating to woman, there is just as naturally associated a feeling of the fit-

ting and the just, a feeling of the congruous and the appropriate, in social life. Now this fact, for fact it is, settles the question—what is the sphere of woman? It tells us where God intended her to move—it tells where we ought ever to find her—not in the camp roughing it with the soldier, but at home—not in the harem quarrelling with her rival, but at home—not in the nunnery wasting her young affections in sentimental pietism, but at home—not in the senate hall in stormy debate or in deep divan, but at home—not in the court of justice and dealing in the severe necessities of law, but amid the charities of home—not, in a word, in the greasy factory where dust and debris are so uncongenial with the fragility of her frame and the gentleness of her heart, but at home amid the quiet and the peace, and the purity and the love, of which she is alike the source and the recipient.

Besides, it is only at home and its co-relative situations that man finds woman to be his complement. In no other situation she can fill, in no other sphere in which she can move, will she so answer the end of her being, so far as this point goes, but at home; and this fact also, for fact it is, settles the question—what is the sphere of woman? In the camp she must either be the superior or the subordinate or the equal of man; she cannot be his complement, or, at least, she is so with multitudinous drawbacks. In the harem she is his slave. In the nunnery she has violently torn in sunder the ties which bind her to human society. And whether as a legislator or a lawyer, or a drudge at the factory wheel, why, she loses every thing of the woman but her sex and its weaknesses, and seems, like the Egyptian sphinx, to have more natures than one.

It being thus clear that home is the sphere of woman in the social economy, a question arises at this point—how is she to be adjusted to her place? It is true that there is a designed corresponding between the situation and the persons to fill it, the natural powers and capabilities of the agent suiting in the most admirable style possible the allotted region of activity, but all experience proves, indeed, the testing of the race, in its social bearings, is but the story of the perverted powers and the misdirected capabilities of the human being, woman as well as man, and some would say chiefly woman. Now, these perverted powers must be restored to their original functions and these misdirected capabilities to their true objects. All

means and appliances must be put in requisition in order that woman may, as she is naturally capable, so in point of fact fill her place in the manner and to the extent that the social economy demands, hence the necessity of education, and of such education begun in early life, and hence the necessity too of a suitable education of the importance of her sphere. The wide and persuasive and powerful influence she exerts is such, that, on her due qualification depends the weal of the race, from its base to its summit, from its rudimental state all through its progress, till it reach step by step the point of a perfect civilization.

It is not the design of this lecture to treat on female education. It would seem that this point was taken for granted in the subject, and that it was admitted that, whatever the sphere, woman was qualified rightly to move in it, still the unity of the theme could not have been preserved unless some slight reference were had to this matter.

Now, there can be no doubt that the three r's, as the Irishman said, are important parts of female education, reading, writing and arithmetic. These lie at the foundation of all useful knowledge, indeed, without them the main instrumentality of acquiring knowledge is awanting, and there can be as little doubt also that the elegant accomplishments, when they can be acquired, may add very much to the usefulness of woman at home. Music and drawing, and painting and embroidery, and a smattering of French and Italian, of heavy German and clumsy Dutch, are all so many acquirements which, if once obtained, may serve to enliven a drawing room conversation and amuse and please for the nonce a drawing room party, and then they are easily retained, other things being equal, and may be exceedingly useful in various situations in life; nor can any body refuse to admit, who is willing to do woman justice, that it is quite competent and that it may be advantageous for her to dabble among the 'ologies and dive deep down into their dark regions. There is geology and ethnology and conchology and entomology, then biology and phrenology and astrology, if you will, all of them in their place somewhat instructive, all of them in their place somewhat profitable, even for a woman to know. Indeed, in certain circles of society, where these and cognate themes may happen to be the subject of conversation, a woman looks exceedingly small, if, by her silence or th

irrevelancy of her remarks, she betrays her entire ignorance and the defective nature of her education; and hence the necessity and the propriety of introducing these departments of knowledge into the curriculum of our female academies and boarding-schools. But there are other 'ologies as well of which no woman, if she is to move in her sphere as she ought to, can afford to remain ignorant. There is the sublime science of washology and its sister bakeology. There is darnology and scrubology. There is mendology, and cookology in its wide comprehensiveness and its untellable utility, a science that the more profoundly it is studied it becomes the more palatable, and the more skilfully its principles are applied its professors acquire the greater popularity and are regarded with a proportionate degree of interest and complacency. Now, all this knowledge must be embraced in any system of female education that pretends to prepare woman for the duties of life.—The knowledge of housekeeping is not only not beneath her notice and regard, but is essentially necessary if she is to be at home what home expects her to be, if, in a word, she is at all to fill her place with credit to herself and comfort to those with whom she may be associated, as daughter or sister, as wife or mother, as instructress or friend, or any other relationship she may sustain to general society. And, in order that these several departments of her education may be kept in their due place and pursued according to their relative importance—that they may be purified and elevated and chastened, and thus that by their union they may subserve to the grand end of manifesting in all its varied and attractive loveliness the female character, they must be baptized, nay, permeated with the spirit and power of true religion. It has been said that man, with all his irreligion, is a religious being. The paradox, if true at all, is eminently true of woman. There is a special unnaturalness existing and manifest between the doctrines and duties and delights of evangelical Christianity and the intellectual and spiritual process of her inner nature, and hence her aptitude for piety in its principles and practices and pleasures, hence too her attainments, and hence the vast influence which godliness exerts on herself and which it enables her to exert on others. Now, to complete her education, religion must come in—not to subsidize, but to regulate and control—not as subordinate, but as principal—not as mere *adden-*

da to what may be regarded as otherwise complete in itself. but as that without which nothing else is or can be complete—in short, the end of true religion, the glory of God as connected with the source of true religion, the sacrifice of Christ, must be exhibited every day as the grand object that is to be sought by all the essential and ornamental departments of her physical and mental and moral training, according as it is written, "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; glorify God with your bodies and spirits, which are God's; whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God, and present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable, which is your reasonable service."

In teaching Christianity, as in teaching any other science, peculiar terminology must be employed. An authorised form of sound words, in addition to the Bible, seems to be just as requisite to successful instruction in religion as a hand book in geology or a manual of botany. It is ignorance and something more which gets up the party cry against all creeds and catechisms, but, while this is the case, oh! the greatest care should be taken lest the dogmata of Christianity be mistaken for Christianity itself—lest instruction in the letter be unattended with the Spirit which giveth life—and hence, while it is generally better in the case of men and women in mature life to reach the heart and the conscience through the head, it is surely preferable, so far as the young are concerned, and to young females in particular, when imparting the knowledge which makes wise to salvation, to reach the head through the conscience and the heart, to make the affections the highway to the understanding, to draw them, in short, with the cords of love and with the bands of a man.

Having thus ascertained the sphere of woman, and adverted to the qualifications which she behoves to possess, that she may be and do what her situation demands, the way is now prepared for the consideration of the influence she exerts in Christian society.

Now, first of all the things—the qualifications just indicated being granted—this influence is extensive, nay, universal.—Where woman is she makes herself felt, but where woman is enlightened by education, and elevated and purified by piety, she makes herself felt for good through every ramification of the body-social. Like the light and heat of the sun, which dif-

fuse themselves everywhere, so everywhere are there indications of her presence and her spirit. From the cellar to the attic there are marks of her tidy hand and her thoughtful heart. The well ordered kitchen owns her sway. The bedroom and parlour and drawing-room confess her authority. The table, and the chimney itself, are fairly within the reach of her pervasive power and must yield to the decisions of her judgment. Children smile in her approval or grieve under her frown.—Old men regard her as a ministering spirit commissioned to cheer and comfort when every other source of enjoyment has gone. She is the light of the dwelling when the dark cloud of adversity envelopes it, and when death crosses the threshhold and with ruthless hand snatches away from it the valued and the dear, it is her hand which wipes away the tear, even when her own eyes are streaming—it is her meek and quiet demeanour and calm submission which soothes and tranquillizes the bereaved mourner.

And, as has been asserted, this influence extends beyond her own proper sphere. If it be chiefly felt at home, it is nevertheless felt and acknowledged abroad. It reaches the school-room and college-hall. It finds its way into the workshop and the busy store. It is realized on 'Change, and even, as some of you well know, in the sweating room of the Bank. And though woman herself, as has been demonstrated, would be altogether out of her place on the red benches of the Parliament House, yet who will deny that she makes herself felt, even in these high places of the land, and helps to modify the actings of our representatives and rulers?

And then this influence is powerful, extensive. It is mighty. It may be resisted indeed, even as the pleasant light may be excluded from some dirty room lest its filth and its disorder be made manifest. It may be resisted indeed, as the genial heat may be prevented from radiating, and thus warming all within its scope. But, let it have fair play and full action, and just as light and heat, unchecked in their operation, reveal and revive all within their reach, so will this influence affect and subdue, and enlighten and raise, and purify and etherialize and sublimate, all and every one whose nature is capable of feeling this influence, all and every thing that, as an enchantress, she touches with her wonder working wand.

Besides this influence, extensive and powerful, is eminently

gentle. It works silently. It is meek in its majesty. This is one of the elements of its power. Like the gentle dew it falls upon the place beneath unseen, unheard. Sometimes it happens there is a little friction, and, in working out her will in her household, or as a member of a household over which she presides, there may occasionally be a collision, but who knows not that she has an emollient in her possession, aye, and that she has the skill to use it, by the timeous application of which the friction ceases and the bruises which the collision may have caused are effectually and speedily healed. The glance of her eye—the sweet smile playing on her countenance—the kind conciliatory word falling from her lips—nay, the very look which she sometimes casts on one, more eloquent far than the softest words which ever fell from her tongue—succeed more efficaciously in maintaining family harmony where it is, and restoring it where it is not, than all other influences put together.

One more general statement. This influence is refining and polishing. It rubs down the hirsute coarseness of man. It frowns vulgarity into a corner, and abashes the impudent forwardness of the pert and assuming. Where it is unknown or trodden under foot, why there is savageism untamed, there is license unbridled, there is heartless cruelty and beastly debasement; but, where it is known and felt, the savage is a savage no more, licence and libertinism tremble and flee, kindness supplants cruelty and manly dignity beastly degradation. A well educated and godly woman can make, and has made, the bully quiet and the boor mannerly, and the brawler meek and gentle as a lamb. In the presence of such a woman the lips of the profane are sealed and the tongue of the obscene is locked in his jaws. Ribaldry and scurrility are frightened into propriety, and, in spite of all that is said to the contrary, it is nevertheless true that slander herself is reft of her weapons, and, if not, yet what is as good, she is shorn of her power to use them as she chooses.

From this general view of the influence of woman, however, but a very imperfect idea of its nature is obtained after all.—It must be contemplated in detail if it is to be correctly understood. It may be useful, therefore, to look at woman in her varied relationships, for the purpose of grasping somewhat of its nature.

She first of all appears in the relation of a daughter. Now, does not the very utterance of the word daughter suggest to the mind of every parent, whose heart is in the right place, a kind and an amount of influence alike powerful and pleasing, alike extensive and intense. In infancy she exerts, unconscious to herself of course, but still she exerts, an influence which positively bends a parent's heart around her, and draws out of that heart all it can pour of interest and love and delight. But, it is not this profuse power which deserves notice chiefly here, because the infant son has an equal, some would hold a greater, power over the parent than the infant daughter. It is the active influence she exerts in the period of after life, and amid the vicissitudes through which the family may pass. Arrived at the period of girlhood, and when, from her position in the family, she is required to apply her previous education for the family weal, why, if there be the average amount of the spirit of girlhood, and if its powers have reached but an average development, is she not the very soul, the life and the heart, of the family circle? She is her mother's companion—her father's friend and confidant. To the one she affords cheerful aid in the management of the household in the necessary absence of her father, or, when even at home, he may be engaged in the duties of his calling. To the other she ministers of the riches of her gladsome glee, of her piquant humour, of her racy conversation, of her sparkling wit, of her tender sympathy, and of her ardent devotional feelings, when at his own happy fireside he is solacing himself from the fatigues and cares, the toil and moil of this weary world. What father but can tell that all this is true? And, much more, what father but feels almost as great a blank at home from the absence of his daughter as from the absence of his wife? What father but often as anxiously longs for the presence of the one as for the presence of the other? And thus, as she is the charm of the family in the season of joy, is she not the succour of the family in the hour of sorrow. When calamity happens, which involve the family fortunes, who so wise in expedients, who so expert in working them, as such a daughter? Who so ready to undergo self-denial, to an amount and of a kind as none else would endure, if so be the family fortunes might be revived and the family *status* regained. To achieve this end, and that her father's honour might be preserved or restored, many a

daughter has consented that her hopes be blighted, and to bury them up in the recesses of her heart; and when all was unavailing, and when prison and death were the doleful issue, why such a daughter has contrived to be his inmate in his cell and nourish him with the milk drawn from her own breasts.

And even when sickness seizes on the household, and chiefly on the heads of the house, how timeous and tender her influence then. She is the ministering angel, whose presence and whose sympathy extracts more than half the evil from the disease, and mitigates and soothes where she cannot deliver. If no voice so tender and no hand so soft as those of a mother to a suffering child, O there is no sight so pleasing and no action so kindly as the face and the fondling of a daughter to a suffering parent.

How different, moreover, are the feelings of the parent on the marriage of a son and on that of a daughter. It is not asserted that, from that important hour, the parents feel that their son is their son no more, but, it is needless to dispute it, that from that hour they regard him as emphatically on his own hook, as now to all intents and purposes doing for himself; and most certainly he is a poltroon of a fellow, a poor spiritless thing, who, after he has taken a wife, chooses to depend on his father and mother. But how different are the feelings with which the daughter is regarded. The old tie is drawn tighter now that she is bound by a new one—the old feelings are tenderer now that she is no longer under their control—the old charm she threw over the family fireside is all the more enchanting now that she revisits it in her new capacity—and thus it is that the poet but gave utterance to nature, in one of her truest voices, when he sang in the person of a parent—

> "My son is my son till he gets a wife,
> But my daughter's my daughter all the days of her life."

It would be improper to leave this thought without looking at woman as a sister. And what power does she exert in this capacity, especially if she be an old sister. Why, in this respect she is in the parent's, in the mother's stead. How does she bustle about among the younger children and manage to keep them all in order. She is the depository of their property, she is the keeper of their secrets, she is the medium of intercourse in important affairs, in which they wish to have a little

of their own will, between them and their parents. She hides their faults from each other and their parents, but encourages them to tell all these faults to their Father in heaven. Their persons and their food and their apparel—their health and cleanliness and comfort—their confidence and peace and joy—their holiness here and their bliss hereafter—all are embraced in the wide range of an old sister's care. What would the lads in a family do without their eldest sister, and what would they not do for their eldest sister? Next to their mother she lives in their heart. They are honoured in her honour. They are jealous of her reputation—as they are of her safety. She is their ornament, and they guard it with the most punctilious care, not even allowing, if that be possible, the breath of slander to sully the purity and dignity of her useful life. They joy in her joy, and her sorrows, in which they can share, are their sorrows. They live in her life, and when she dies it is thus they sing—

Sister, thou wast mild and lovely,
Gentle as the summer's breeze,
Pleasant as the air of evening
As it floats among the trees.

Dearest sister, thou hast left us
And thy loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God who hath bereft us—
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet, again we hope to meet thee,
When the day of life is fled,
In that deathless, sinless mansion,
Where no farewell tear is shed.

The influence which woman exerts as a lover is proverbially mighty and tender. When she has awakened, no matter how, that master emotion of the human breast, and when she reciprocates it, why, for the time being and ever afterwards, she sits as a queen in the heart of man, and rules him, not capriciously indeed—love is not capricious—but thoroughly and at will. She has got the key of his heart, and, having unlocked it and entered, she claims the mysterious domain as her own. She has bound him as with a spell, so that he thinks and feels and speaks and acts, he sleeps and dreams and wakes, as in a new world, in which she forms the most prominent ob-

ject and over which she throws the loveliest hues.' Love is essentially romantic. It is the ideal of human existence. It imbues the dull, cold realities of life with the spiritual element, and paints them with the beauteous colourings of imagination and of hope. Love is essentially poetic, and, in the wrapt musings which it inspires, the poetic fire glows as if beneath the bare, cold ribs of death. Its potency in this respect is felt, alike by the man of genuine refinement and severe taste, who would not for the world be thought so silly as to regard his lady-love as another angel, and by the unsophisticated mind, all untaught to dissemble or conceal, or even control, his emotion as he exclaims—

> Oh! Peggy, sweeter than the dawning day,
> Sweeter than gowany glens or new mawn hay,
> Blyther than lambs that frisk out o'er the knowes,
> Straighter than aught that in the forest grows.
> Her een the clearest blob of dew outshines,
> The lily in her breast its beauty tynes
> Her legs, her arms, her cheeks, her mouth, her een,
> Will be my death, and that will be shortly seen.

Now, let the woman who is thus beloved, and who honestly reciprocates it, bring her religious principles into fair and full play, and what an amount of influence for good may she not exert.

It happens occasionally, but how it is no easy matter to tell, that godly women love rakes. That somehow, all unlikely though it appears, unprincipled and ungodly men place their affections on women that fear God, and that, on the other hand, they meet and encourage their attentions. Surely this is one of love's great mysteries. Now, on the principle laid down, that woman in this case has entered the man's heart and sways over it her kindly sceptre, tell me if she has not the power to drive out thence those principles and passions which have debased and destroyed him? And she has done so in thousands of instances. The force, the gentle force, of her character, the purity and warmth of her heart, the preference she manifests for him in spite of his wildness, and the earnest entreaties poured into his ears by her streaming tears and bursting sighs, as well as by the thrilling tones of her voice, have so broken the power of the rakish propensity, as that, while a lover was made worthy of a woman's love, a soul was saved from perishing in its

corruption. Chiefly has this happened when, asserting her dignity and submitting to the authority of the Word of God, she told him that, unless he agreed to act a manly and not devilish part, she would never be his. The majesty of the law of God, brought to tell by the mistress of his heart on his conscience, subdued him into penitence and reformation as it declared, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath light with darkness, what concord hath Christ with Belial, what agreement hath she that believeth with an infidel?" Thus it is that virtuous love prevails. It were well if such influence as this were more frequently exerted by godly women, as it is thus so completely within their province. It would save themselves and their parents many a heart-pang. It would preserve and embellish their own character and secure the harmony and happiness of their families. And it would do, perhaps, more for abashing one species of iniquity out of sight of society than all other mere human instrumentality put together.

It is not easy to measure the depravity of the seducer, whose highest ambition is to revel on virgin purity and rob his victim of all that is valuable. "He," as Dr. Dwight expresses it, "who can adopt such a character has put off the character of a man and put on that of a fiend, and with the spirit of a fiend alone he pursues and accomplishes the infernal purpose. The ruin sought and achieved is immense. It is not the burning of a house. It is not the filching of property. It is not the deprivation of liberty. It is not the destruction of life.—The seducer plunders the wretched victim of character, morals, happiness, hope and heaven, enthrals her in the eternal bondage of sin, consumes her beyond the grave in endless fire, and murders her soul with an ever living death."

The success of the seducer, however, depends on gaining a ready ear and on injecting his poison into a heart that is not altogether unwilling to receive it. But ardent as woman is to listen to the talk of love, and confiding as woman is to depend on the promises of love, and sanguine as woman is to view in all their golden glittering the visions of love, were she but wise enough to be wary and to bring her godly jealousy into play, and stand on her high pre-eminence of modest purity and untouchable honour, why the flattery would fall innocuous on her

ear, and, if she did not unsting the serpent that would beguile her, her heart would be proof against the virulence of its poison.

Her influence as a lover still farther is felt and seen, in its most amiable aspects, when her spell has enchanted a man of honour and of worth. Of such a man she has no fear, or, at all events, no fear of her virtue. In this case generally there is the confidence of love. To such a man, moreover, she is in point of fact, so long as they sustain this relation, the source of the *summum bonum* of this nether world, whether he knows it or not, and sometimes he does not know it. She is to him what the pole is to the needle, the helm to the ship, the rein to the horse,—his grand moving power for good. The desire to please which she awakens in the heart of man is probably the finest specimen of this influence. If ever man loses his selfishness it is when he is in love. If ever a Christian man, swayed by mundane motives, seems to get quit of this vile propensity, it is when endeavouring to secure the favour of the woman who holds his heart, but in whose heart he knows the love of God reigns.

And what shall be said of the influence of woman as a wife, and how shall it be said? It requires courage and taste and tact to deal with such a theme as it deserves. Probably, as there is no such union as that existing between husband and wife, there is no such influence as that which the one exercises over the other. It is admitted that the influence is mutual and reciprocal, and that as they are no more twain, but one, so each is to the other a pervasive, a ruling, a controlling power.

The idiosyncrasy of a wife's character determines to a great extent the nature and the amount of a wife's influence. This is a most important point, and, unless it be well understood and well weighed, much misapprehension must necessarily prevail, and, in the concerns of every day life, much injustice may be done alike to husbands and wives. It is worth while to repeat the sentiment that the idiosyncrasy of a wife's character determines to a great extent the nature and the amount of a wife's influence.

Now, as in men, these idiosyncrasies are various, and easily discernible. Indeed, they may be classified. There are your Mrs. Caudles for example, who love nothing better than seizing on their husbands in the proper mood, and at the proper

time, and working on their uxoriousness, manage to get out of them all they will and compel them to say,

> Nought to be gained at woman's han',
> Unless ye gi'e her a' the gill,
> So I'll leave off where I began,
> And tak' my auld cloak about me.

There are too your Mrs. St. Clairs, so well hit off in Uncle Tom, who are perpetually teazing their husbands about their own troubles, and whose peevish fretfulness and callous selfishness grudge even the attention which they happen to pay and the love they lavish on their own children. There are your Mrs. Marthas, who are continually in a bustle, and whose soul seems bound up in their wardrobe, whose thoughts so run on the children's pinafores and their father's linen, that they won't allow the poor men to sleep o'nights. "Harry, love," said the wife of an eminent Judge in Scotland one night when, on returning from Court after a long and fatiguing cause, he had retired, "Harry, love," rousing him out of a sweet slumber, "Harry, love, Harry, love, where is your white waistcoat?" And then there are your Mrs. Shanters, your wives of great vehemence and sound sense, who are not afraid to tell their husbands their duty and scold them into something like the proprieties of conjugal life. It was such a wife that Burns idealized in his immortal poem, and whose ill requited wisdom made his muse weep as he sang—

> "Ah! gentle dames it gars me greet
> To think how mony counsels sweet,
> How mony reverend sage advices,
> The husband frae the wife despises."

It was such a wife, the sample of a large and worthy class, which prompted the pathetic lament over poor Tam's failings:—

> "Oh Tam! had'st thou but been sae wise,
> As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice!
> She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
> A bletherin', blusterin', drunken blellum;
> That frae November till October,
> Ae market-day thou was nae sober;
> That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
> Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;

That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the Lord's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirkton Jean till Monday.
She prophesied, that, late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in Doon,
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By Alloway's auld haunted kirk."

These varieties, it must be acknowledged, have each their peculiar influence, and though the idiosyncrasy may not just have the happiest effect, yet on the whole a good husband accommodates himself to it. When religion takes hold of these peculiarities, and thus changes them into virtues, why they but give intensity to the relationship and weight to the character. When a husband knows that with all his wife's managing it is his weal and his family's she is seeking—that with all her peevishness and temper she has their mutual interest at heart—when there is manifest similar ardour on her part for the beauty of spiritual adorning, as there is for external decency and order, he knows in all his soul that her vehemence and zeal against failings and crimes are set off by the unimpeachable consistency and the beauties of holiness which array her character—the knowledge makes him not only bear, but yield and please and gratify the woman who has ventured her all on his honour and his love. Solomon,—and he was a good, perhaps the best judge in the matter,—tells us that such a wife will do her husband good and not evil, all the days of his life. As an anonymous author has it, she will do him good by promoting his domestic comfort. This is indeed placed almost wholly in her hands; it rests with her to see that the fireside is the place of attraction—that home is the crystal spot on earth. And love will teach ingenuity to the faithful wife, and show to her a thousand ways by which she may endear the home circle. If she wishes to enjoy her husband's society, she must be a keeper at home, and so arrange her family, as that he, when he returns from the care and noise and contention of the world, shall find a retreat in which sweet converse shall beguile him of his cares; and peace, and love, and order, and gentle welcome, and soothing sympathy, shall form a striking contrast to the scenes he has just quitted. And she will do good to her husband by sharing his cares. On many in mo-

dern times the charge is not incumbent of labouring with the hands to provide food and raiment for the family. The different constitution of modern society from ancient has placed upon man the duty of maintaining a family, and left to woman the sweeter privilege of ordering the charities of home. Yet even now a wife may do much to lessen the cares of a husband.—She may not fully understand the nature of his employment, she cannot exactly enter into the details of his business, but she can give the attentive ear, she can endeavour to comprehend his difficulties, she can forbear mentioning any irritating domestic circumstances, she can soften down annoyances, sometimes she can cheer him by reminding him of sound consoling promises of God's Word, she can show him the command of Holy Writ, to cast his care upon the Lord. She can tell him that they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, and perhaps lead him to say with David, "When I am afraid I will trust in thee;" and when all these fail, and her anxious eye sees the cloud still darken over his brow, then she can pray with a firm unwavering faith that God would indeed lift up the light of his countenance upon him and give him peace. Nor is it less her duty to share his joys. If her husband have succeeded in some pursuit, with what heartiness should the wife enter into his pleasure. Never should the wandering eye betray that she listens to the details which interest him with indifference. She should value his pursuits if for no other reason than because they are *his*, and by an ever ready sympathy should do him good and not evil all the days of his life. Never should the depressing fear or the ardent hope be thrown coldly, harshly, again on him who utters it. One such repulsion will do more to alienate the love of a sensitive mind than many little acts of neglect and annoyance.

A wife will also do good to her husband by encouraging him to holiness and virtue, and warning him against sin. In the intimacy of domestic life the first tendency to evil is sometimes evident to the wife, and it is her duty to rebuke with all earnestness, and to plead with all gentleness, against conduct which may be displeasing to God and man. Abigail's counsel and reproof of David is a beautiful instance of womanly taste and delicacy thus employed. When Nabal, in return for David's kindness and protection, had contemptuously refused refreshment to the warrior shepherd, how doe Abigail

propitiate David's wrath, and dissuade him from revenge.—"And it shall come to pass when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel, that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself." And in like manner, how often may the wife expostulate with her husband, and thus keep him from evil, that it may not grieve him, and in after days he may look back with gratitude and affection for the warning voice which checked his onward course, and bade him pause and consider.

Such, gentlemen, is the influence of woman as a wife, and where it is acknowledged and honored, the romance of love remains, the poetry of love throws its charm over the married pair down to their last days on earth, gilding them even more brightly than it did in the days when they first saw and loved each other. Such a husband and wife never grow old, for though the almond tree may flourish, and desire fail, and wrinkles furrow the brow, and the rosy hue leave the cheek, —though the eye does not beam with its former witchery, nor the tongue roll forth the flood of melody that was wont to thrill the recesses of their being, their hearts are young and green as ever, and the freshness and ripeness of their mutual affection, hallowed by the spirit of holiness, are a part of their preparation for their abode in the amaranthine bowers of the Paradise of God.

But if such be the influence of woman as a wife, what is it as a mother? It is in this relationship that her power for good is specially manifest, and specially blissful. The change which motherhood produces in woman herself is wonderful, and deserving of a passing notice in this illustration. That a young and delicate female, who, up to the time perhaps that she was married, had never known a care, save those which love imposes, who was a stranger to heavy toil, and had never known fatigue, whose every wish was gratified, because all around her were her willing servants or ministers, and who from the time she was married till the hour that made her a a mother, was the idol of her husband's heart, now dearer to him than ever—that such a young and favoured woman should, as if by some mighty sudden power be changed to the thought-

ful, careful nurse of a helpless babe, and seem to live but for it, is, indeed, another of the deep mysteries of love. Willingly does she watch it by day in its cozy crib, and drink in purer, sweeter joy from her vigil, than ever she drank from any other source. Willingly does she prevent the night watches, that its rest may be sweet and undisturbed. Forgetful of herself, her sole care is centred on this little object, and she lives, and moves, and works, and watches, and wrestles for its good. Such a change,—so sudden,—of her whole habits, business, thought, did we not witness it every day, would appear a more wonderful metamorphosis than any that Ovid has described. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb." Now, as committed to her care, the child is just what the mother makes it; or, at the very least, she stamps upon it the impress of her own character. It is not too bold a use of the figure to say that it is in her hands as clay in the hands of the potter, and she can mould it at will. The power she can exert for a considerable period is well nigh absolute, for during all this time it is passive in her hand—and even when the understanding opens, and the will begins to work, and the passions to play, such is her power that she, as none other, can furnish the understanding and bend the will, and direct and control and subdue the affections.

Her influence thus exerted in early life she exerts and retains so long as life lasts, and its effects are seen in the history of her family alike in their temporal and spiritual condition. A mother's counsels, a mother's prayers, a mother's psalms, a mother's reproofs, a mother's commendations, the gentle firmness of her authority, and the warning attractions of her example, are immortal; they never die; they may for the time be forgotten, profligacy may bury them in the grave with all that was lovely and pure and ingenuous in youth; ingratitude may raze them from the table of the heart, and neglect may hide them so far in the treasures of the memory, that they may seem as if lost amid the rubbish which encumber it; but all will not do; and in an hour when he thinks not, his mother's power will reclaim the prodigal, and restore the ingrate to her and to himself. So have I read of the shipwrecked sailor who in a foreign land sent for a minister to see him when about to die. He was a Scotchman, and the minister was a Scotchman

too. He was well acquainted with the way of salvation, but so profligate had he been that he was afraid to look to the Saviour. Nothing the minister could say seemed to touch him. He knew it all, but it was not for him. He had sinned away his day of grace. With profound knowledge of the human heart, and well aware what chord to strike, the minister commenced humming to himself the old sacred covenanting ballad:

"Oh mother, dear Jerusalem,
When shall I come to thee,
When shall my sorrows have an end,
Thy joys I long to see."

At once the dying man raised himself on his bed—"Where learnt you that tune; how came you to know that poem in this foreign land?" "My mother taught me when I sat a child on her knee, and now that I am here, it is sweeter to me than ever." "And my mother taught me the same tune also, and oh! that her prayers for me were now answered." And they were answered. This incident softened his indurated heart—it oiled the lock of its door. It freely and promptly opened to the entrance of the truth, and salvation with it; and thus the long-forgotten memory was revived, and a mother's influence exerted its power to the saving of a soul.

But such influence not only reclaims; it excites and confirms and establishes in the paths of honourable existence, and of holy obedience. The remark has so often been made that it is now a mere commonplace—"that great men had good mothers." And even where greatness was not realized, and where fame never had occasion to herald discoveries in science, nor deeds of daring and of benevolence, who will deny that the honest labour and the honourable wealth, and the humble piety and quiet usefulness, which mark the scenes of our every-day life, had their origin in the lessons which were learned from a mother's lips; and when the author, or rather the instrument, of all this good dies, who so ready to acknowledge her worth as the *reft* husband and the sorrowing children. Some twelve months ago I was strolling through the churchyard of Digby, and like the sentimental but godly Hervey meditating among the tombs. A marble obelisk among other monuments attracted my attention. On three of its sides there was no inscription, so far as I remember, save two initials. My curiosity

was greatly excited, and, on hurrying round to look at the fourth side, what was my wonder, on reading the simple, sublime epitaph—"*To my Mother.*" Say, whether she must not have been a mother every way worthy of such an epitaph, and whether the child was not worthy of such a mother. I know not whether the child were son or daughter, whether rich or poor, whether married or single. But I know this—that a mother's love had warmed that child's heart. That a mother's influence had guided and guarded that child's life—that a mother's prayers had drawn down blessings on that child's head. I know that filial obligation bound that child to the soul of his mother by a tie which death did not dissolve. She lives for him yet, and if he be still alive—no matter where—his mother is his polar star, guiding him up to heaven.

Now the secret of all this influence is love. Truly did Gray say, "We can never have but one Mother." No love, not even the tenderest, can equal hers, for she will love on, though sickness should wither the flower, and turn all its beauty into decay, and fix her firmest and deepest affection on that one of her children who has the least outward grace and loveliness. Her love, unlike all others, can withstand neglect, and ingratitude, and forgetfulness. The prodigal son may stray from his home, and the world may frown on him, and frown justly, and all the love of neighbours and of friends, or even of brother or sister, may be worn out by his folly and wickedness, yet there is a stream of love in the mother's heart, ever fresh, and ever living—he is still her own loved son, and one word, perchance one look of sorrow, will win forgiveness for a life of unkindness. The love of a mother is like the bounty of God, who causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust.

There is but one theme more on which something might have been said with advantage to many now hearing me. I refer to the influence of woman as a member of the Church, and as connected with society.

As a member of the Church, her influence is wide and powerful. When she justifies her connection with this wonderful society, she stirs up all her strength and might in working out the great design for which it has been organized. It is to the Gospel, as deposited in and declared by the Church, that she

owes her elevation. It is to Christianity, as embodied in the Church, that she owes her restoration to her due place, and the good she does while she occupies it. Had it not been for the religion of Christ and its enlightening and purifying tendency, she had still been a slave all over the world; she had been sunken in ignorance, doomed to servitude, the sport of the passions, and the butt of the cruelty of man her master,—a mere chattel in law, a mere thing; in fact, a mere convenience which might be used or neglected or destroyed, just as it might happen according to the whim of her owner. Had it not been for the religion of Christ, she had been all this and worse: and she knows this if she knows anything, and she acknowledges it. Gratitude for the good makes her work for the Giver; and in how many instances has the Giver to record his approbation of woman's *willinghood* in her cause as he did that of Mary, when he said, "She hath done what she could; and verily I say unto you, that wherever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, this that she hath done shall be told as a memorial of her." It comes from all this that the contemptuous sneer has been bandied from one infidel to another that the Church stands by women, and that were it not for women it would soon die out. We take the sneer for the truth it teaches; we submit to the sarcasm for the sake of the sacred society against which it is hurled; and we will glory in the peculiarity—if peculiarity it be—till your infidel creed and your infidel companionship furnish finer samples of female character than the so-much *decried* Christian Church. And think you that the sense of her indebtedness to the blessed Saviour who has made her what she is,—which she daily feels has no weight with those who know it, that the ardours of her piety, and the warmth of her zeal, and the purity of her motives, and the self-denial of her life, have no weight? Think you that the constancy of her attachment to the cause and the people of Christ, and her wisdom and tact in persevering and perpetuating the peace and prosperity of the Church, have no weight? Oh, think you that her prayers and her pains have no weight, in which she labors night and day that men may be blessed indeed, and all nations call Him blessed? Nay, verily, they have weight, they are every year becoming more weighty, and the likelihood is, notwithstanding many a sad

forebodings that within the Church she will do still more for her spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

And when she moves among the wicked as a messenger of mercy, as an angel visitant to the abodes of want and of woe, when the eye sees her then it blesses her, when the ear hears her then it gives witness to her, because she delivers the poor that cry and those who have no help of man at all. She is eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and the cause she knows not, she searches out, and the blessing of those that are ready to perish comes upon her, and she makes the heart of the widow to sing for joy.

In this city what scope for such labour, what opportunity for such deeds of Christian philanthropy. I do not know if I am prepared to endorse the opinion of one of your city missionaries, that Halifax, as compared with its population, is more wicked than most great cities in the old world, but there is room and verge enough for the labours of the whole sisterhood of charity. The poor need instruction in that which belongs alike to the useful and the ornamental—the art of *living*. The slattern housewife requires lessons on tidiness and economy, and a word fitly spoken to one such may revolutionize her whole conduct. The abandoned child who is left to grow up more carelessly than the weed by the wayside—yes, more carelessly, for the weed is sometimes useful after all—demands to be rescued from ignorance and crime, and what more fitting work for a tender-hearted woman? What work for woman's plastic hand more noble than this? And then there is the Sabbath School, with its weekly lessons in sacred truth, and there is the Ragged School, with its daily lessons in health and order, in cleanliness and truth, in knowledge and obedience. The most refined and elegant among us, the best born and the best bred, would but increase the lustre of their refinement and the purity of their blood if they adopted the Latin maxim, "I am a woman, and nothing that pertains to my kind is unsuitable for me." Oh, there is more true glory in redeeming one such wretch to order and decorum, to good citizenship and pure Christianity, than was won by the victories of Inkermann and Balaclava.

Let seige be laid to some den of filth and shame on your own Citadel Hill, and not by shell and grape, shot and a shower of brimstone fire, but by the armour of righteousness on the right

and the left. Let its inmates, man or woman—nay, but one of them—be subdued to the obedience of faith, and a mightier work is done than when Sebastopol fell. Yes, and the fame of those deeds shall have died, and the page which records them shall cease to be read, oh, these mighty works of love and humanity will be held in everlasting remembrance.

Such, gentlemen, in my apprehension, is woman's sphere in Christian society—such the influence she is fitted and designed to exert. At home looking well to the ways of her household, in the Church keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And like your Elizabeths and Marys, and Marthas and Dorcases, walking in all the commandments of the Lord, blameless, and in the world like the Master going about doing good—instructing the ignorant, reclaiming the wandering, befriending the orphan in his homelessness, and watching him in the home in which in her mercy she found him. Like the Saviour, when he was on earth, healing the sick and binding up those who are broken in heart, frowning intemperance from her own special domain, and doing her best to shut up every haunt of lewdness and of lust.

Ye Christian maids and matrons, whom I love in the truth, here is your allotted work,—work which is twice blessed—blessed in her who does it, and in her to whom it is done; work which shall ennoble you with the only true nobility, and which shall invest you here with more than queenly dignity and queenly renown—work which shall one day be openly acknowledged and rewarded by him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Crown of the British Empire sits at this time on the head of a woman, and its sceptre is swayed by a female hand. She is hedged with the divinity which surrounds a queen.—The riches of nature and the labours of art are laid under contribution to minister to her wants. Her person is protected by the bravest army, and her wishes are anticipated by the proudest of her lords. Her name is familiar as a household word in every dwelling, and remembered at the throne of God wherever prayer and supplication are made. Her dominion stretches from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Her subjects belong to all tribes and kindreds and tongues and peoples, while she herself is among the humblest and godliest of them all. THE QUEEN, *God bless her!* we

can shout; and this evening with hearty good will, GREAT IS VICTORIA, THE QUEEN! But hearken a moment to me, and I will tell you of a queen whose royalty springs from a higher source, and whose fame will be measured by a longer term.—On her brow sits a crown whose lustre and whose worth reduce to a bauble the diadem which nevertheless shines as a rainbow on Victoria's head,—it is the crown of righteousness that fadeth not away. Her person is adorned with costlier array than Victoria's royal robes, though laden with orient pearls and gold. She is clad with the robes of righteousness and the garments of salvation. And above them all there hangs the mantle of charity in spotless purity and feminine grace, brilliant in its beauty. An obsequious troop of graces and virtues continually surround her and attend on her pleasure, and whose earnest, devout and loyal homage so far transcend the blood and the obedience of her maids of honour. Health, before whose ruddy face and odorous breath dirt and disease, filth and fever, flee away. Beauty, whose plastic hand moulds into models of spiritual elegance the deformities and debasements which cross her path with her ethereal touch.—Intelligence and refinement, who open the blind eyes and the deaf ears, and unseal the mouth of the dumb and make the lips of the stammerer to speak plainly. Virtue dispensing its own rewards on earth with a liberal hand, and holiness pointing her finger to heaven and leading her way. Salvation, proclaiming the year of jubilee, peace on earth—good will to man. Such a queen is a Christian woman moving in her proper sphere, exerting her legitimate power. Their province is similar to that of the ministering spirits who are sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation, and the King of Kings and Lord of Lords owns them as his, and they shall be acknowledged in that day when he shall say, "I was sick and ye visited me, I was a stranger and ye took me in, I was naked and ye clothed me, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."